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Around the World

Soviets Pushing More Merchant Ships Into Naval Role

LONDON — The Soviet Union is causing concern among western defense organizations by using more and more of its merchant ships in a naval role, Jane's Fighting Ships said yesterday. It added, however, that the United States is still the world's greatest sea power.

The 1965-1966 edition of the authoritative British publication singled out Soviet trawlers as an example of non-fighting ships which can be put to military uses. The West has frequently accused the Russians of using their fishing vessels to carry out off-shore spy operations.

The publication said the Soviet Navy had concentrated recently on pro-

ducing missile-firing destroyers, anti-submarine frigates and nuclear-powered submarines. It added that Russia had been more cooperative than ever before in providing information and photographs for the new edition.